



WORKFORCE OBSERVATIONS

State of Wisconsin
Department of Workforce Development
Office of Economic Advisors

FOR WEST CENTRAL WISCONSIN COUNTIES

BARRON, CHIPPEWA, CLARK, DUNN, EAU CLAIRE, PEPIN, PIERCE, POLK, ST. CROIX

November
2004

Unemployment Rates Change Little in October

October employment numbers rose as more residents in West Central Wisconsin either returned to work or found new jobs. The unemployment rate in the region declined from 3.8 percent in September to 3.7 percent in October. Unemployment rates in both the West Central region and the Eau Claire metropolitan area dropped as residents found jobs and the number of unemployed declined.

The unemployment rate, not seasonally adjusted, in the combined Eau Claire-Chippewa area declined in October to 3.5 percent from 3.6 percent in September. Individually, The Chippewa County unemployment rate was unchanged while the Eau Claire County rate dropped from 3.3 percent in September to 3.1 percent in October. Even though many of local county rates dropped the unemployment

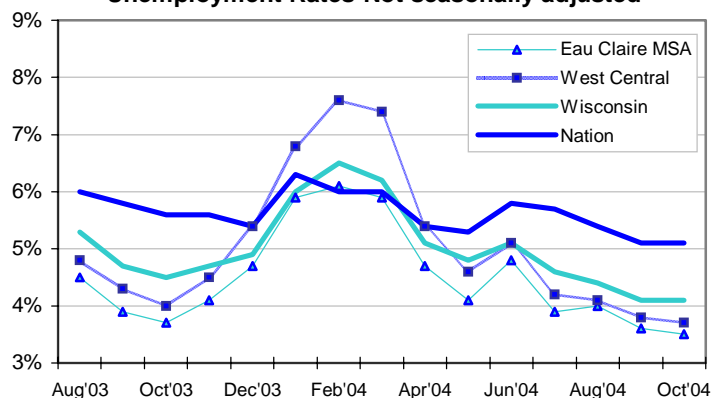
rate in Wisconsin was unchanged at 4.1 percent.

Roughly 2,780 more residents in the nine-county area were working in October than in September. The total number of employed rose to 232,965 in a total labor force of 242,035. That left 9,070 unemployed and looking for work and includes a slight decline from the previous month. Compared with one year ago there were 500 fewer unemployed and 2,825 more employed.

In the Eau Claire-Chippewa metropolitan area the number of residents with jobs is 1,700 higher than one year ago while the number of unemployed is down by 70. Out of a total labor force in the metro area of 89,300 in October, 86,200 were employed and 3,140 were unemployed and looking for work.

Employment in five of the seven rural counties in the region increased during the month. In spite of an increase of 2,500 workers in the number of employed in the rural area there was still a small increase in the number of

Unemployment Rates-Not seasonally adjusted



	Aug'03	Sep'03	Oct'03	Aug'04	Sep'04	Oct'04
Eau Claire MSA	4.5%	3.9%	3.7%	4.0%	3.6%	3.5%
West Central	4.8%	4.3%	4.0%	4.1%	3.8%	3.7%
Wisconsin	5.3%	4.7%	4.5%	4.4%	4.1%	4.1%
Nation	6.0%	5.8%	5.6%	5.4%	5.1%	5.1%

Civilian Labor Force Estimates* for West Central Wisconsin counties: October 2004

	Barron			Chippewa			Clark			Dunn			Eau Claire Co.		
	Oct '04	Sep '04	Oct '03	Oct '04	Sep '04	Oct '03	Oct '04	Sep '04	Oct '03	Oct '04	Sep '04	Oct '03	Oct '04	Sep '04	Oct '03
Labor force	24,747	25,026	25,004	32,656	32,537	31,980	16,561	16,518	16,554	24,705	23,256	24,369	56,683	56,600	55,735
Employed	23,693	23,950	23,765	31,250	31,138	30,637	15,798	15,842	15,806	24,052	22,569	23,660	54,954	54,757	53,874
Unemployed	1,054	1,076	1,239	1,406	1,399	1,343	763	676	748	653	687	709	1,729	1,843	1,861
% unemployed	4.3	4.3	5.0	4.3	4.3	4.2	4.6	4.1	4.5	2.6	3.0	2.9	3.1	3.3	3.3

	Pepin			Pierce			Polk			St. Croix			West Central region		
	Oct '04	Sep '04	Oct '03	Oct '04	Sep '04	Oct '03	Oct '04	Sep '04	Oct '03	Oct '04	Sep '04	Oct '03	Oct '04	Sep '04	Oct '03
Labor force	3,224	3,218	3,229	21,908	21,488	21,301	22,559	22,378	23,370	38,992	38,272	38,180	242,035	239,293	239,722
Employed	3,097	3,089	3,119	21,080	20,686	20,535	21,637	21,450	22,308	37,404	36,704	36,436	232,965	230,185	230,140
Unemployed	127	129	110	828	802	766	922	928	1,062	1,588	1,568	1,744	9,070	9,108	9,582
% unemployed	3.9	4.0	3.4	3.8	3.7	3.6	4.1	4.1	4.5	4.1	4.1	4.6	3.7	3.8	4.0

* not seasonally adjusted

Industry Employment Estimates for West Central Wisconsin: October 2004

(Employment in thousands)	Barron			Clark			Dunn			Pepin		
	Oct '04	Sep '04	Oct '03	Oct '04	Sep '04	Oct '03	Oct '04	Sep '04	Oct '03	Oct '04	Sep '04	Oct '03
Total Nonfarm	21.8	22.0	21.7	10.4	10.3	10.1	16.9	15.8	16.7	2.2	2.2	2.2
Const/Min'g/Nat. Resources	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.1	0.2	0.1
Manufacturing	6.2	6.5	6.3	2.8	2.8	2.8	2.2	2.2	2.1	0.1	0.1	0.1
Trade	3.5	3.4	3.4	1.4	1.4	1.4	2.8	2.8	2.8	0.5	0.5	0.5
Transportation & Utilities	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.4	1.7	1.7	1.8	0.1	0.1	0.1
Financial Activities	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.1	0.1	0.1
Education & Health Services	2.2	2.2	2.2	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.6	1.6	1.5	0.3	0.3	0.3
Leisure & Hospitality	1.7	1.8	1.8	0.8	0.9	0.8	1.6	1.6	1.5	0.3	0.3	0.2
Info/Prof. & Bus.Serv./Other	1.7	1.7	1.7	0.8	0.8	0.7	1.4	1.3	1.3	0.2	0.2	0.2
Total Government	4.7	4.5	4.5	2.2	2.1	2.2	4.4	3.4	4.5	0.5	0.4	0.5
	Pierce			Polk			St. Croix			Eau Claire MSA		
	Oct '04	Sep '04	Oct '03	Oct '04	Sep '04	Oct '03	Oct '04	Sep '04	Oct '03	Oct '04	Sep '04	Oct '03
Total Nonfarm	10.9	10.5	10.2	14.3	14.1	14.8	27.7	27.9	27.2	80.0	79.4	78.5
Const/Min'g/Nat. Resources	0.6	0.6	0.5	0.7	0.7	0.8	2.0	2.0	1.8	3.8	3.8	3.5
Manufacturing	1.1	1.1	1.1	3.5	3.5	3.7	5.3	5.4	5.5	11.3	11.4	10.9
Trade	0.7	0.6	0.8	2.2	2.2	2.1	4.5	4.4	4.3	12.8	12.7	12.9
Transportation & Utilities	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.3	0.3	0.3	1.2	1.1	1.1	2.9	2.9	2.9
Financial Activities	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.5	0.5	0.5	1.2	1.2	1.1	3.7	3.7	3.7
Education & Health Services	1.2	1.2	1.1	2.0	2.0	1.9	2.9	2.8	2.8	12.8	12.8	12.6
Leisure & Hospitality	1.3	1.3	1.2	1.0	1.1	1.3	3.3	3.5	3.2	7.6	7.7	7.5
Information/Prof. & Bus.Serv.	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.5	1.5	1.5	3.9	3.9	3.7	8.6	8.7	8.0
Other Services	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	3.9	3.9	3.8
Total Government	4.1	3.7	3.6	2.5	2.3	2.7	3.5	3.5	3.6	12.6	11.8	12.7

Current month preliminary. Estimates based on March 2003 benchmark. Summing from unrounded numbers.

unemployed. The greatest gains in employment occurred in Dunn, Pierce and St. Croix counties. In Dunn County especially this increase is associated with the return of college students and includes not only workers returning to jobs at the university but also the increase in jobs with area restaurants and retail stores.

The additional jobs in Dunn County did help reduce the unemployment rate in October to 2.6 percent, down from 3.0 in September and lower than the unemployment rate of 2.9 percent of one year ago. The unemployment rate in Dunn County ranked fourth lowest in the state in October.

Dunn County was also among the 25 counties in the state where unemployment rates declined during the month. Other West Central counties where rates were lower in

October included Pepin, where the rate dropped from 4.0 in September to 3.9 percent, and Eau Claire where the rate declined from 3.3 to 3.1 percent. Sixteen counties in the state showed no change in unemployment rates during the month including Barron, Chippewa, Polk and St. Croix.

Compared with one year ago, most counties in the state, 54 out of 72, reported lower unemployment rates. In the West Central region that included the counties of Barron, Dunn, Eau Claire, Polk, and St. Croix.

In most of these counties the number of jobs with local employers was greater this October than one year ago. Most of the job gains were with employers in industries other than manufacturing. Manufacturing employment, especially in the rural counties remained below the level of last year. In the metro area, however, manufacturing jobs are now 400 higher than October 2003. In Octo-

ber there were 11,300 manufacturing jobs in the Eau Claire-Chippewa area compared with 10,900 jobs twelve months earlier. Most of that gain occurred during the second and third quarters of 2004. In each of the last two months, the number of manufacturing jobs declined.

There were 80,000 jobs in the metro area in October, a net gain of 600 jobs since September and 1,500 more than one year ago. In the last twelve months employers in professional and business services added roughly 600 jobs and employers in health care and social assistance added 500 jobs. There were also 400 more jobs with manufacturing employers and 300 additional jobs in construction. Employment with trade and government employers was down by 100 jobs in each industry.



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